

J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board
Minutes of the 254th Quarterly Meeting
Atlanta, GA
February 9-10, 2012

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The Board met in Closed Session

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The 254th meeting of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FSB) took place in Atlanta, Georgia, February 9-10, 2012.

Members in attendance at the quarterly Board meeting were: Chairman Tom Healy, Vice Chair Susan Ness and Members Shelby Lewis, Mark Alexander, Betty Castor, and Gabriel Guerra-Mondragón. Members Anita McBride, Lisa Caputo and Jean Becker participated in portions of the meeting by telephone.

Friday, February 10, 2012

Open Session

Chairman Healy opened the public meeting, welcoming all to Atlanta. He brought the meeting to order and thanked Dr. Shelby Lewis for the arrangements in Atlanta. He commended her great leadership and cited her numerous accomplishments.

Dr. Lewis thanked Chairman Healy for the warm introduction and introduced two students from Clark-Atlanta University who were serving as volunteers during the meeting. They would be leading the Board Members around campus, as guides.

Welcoming Comments from Atlanta

Shelby Lewis introduced prominent Atlantans who contributed to the organization of the FSB meeting in Atlanta.

-- Loretta Parham, the CEO and Director of the Woodruff Library at the Atlanta University Center, where the meeting was held. She welcomed the visitors to the library and described some of the library's collections, contributors and educators. She explained that the Woodruff Library is special in that it is shared by four universities; Morehouse College, Spelman College, Clark Atlanta University and the Interdenominational Theological Center.

-- Dr. Robert Franklin, current president of Morehouse College and past president of the Interdenominational Theological Center, and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Woodruff Library. He also warmly welcomed the visitors to the library. The Woodruff Library has great pride in its director, Loretta Parham, who is recognized as a visionary in the field. Dr. Franklin reviewed the history of the university and of the library. He also cited several professors at the university, one who had been one of the first Fulbright Scholars Program to India in 1947, Dr. Robert Brisbane, a political scientist.

Dr. Lewis introduced C.T. Martin, a Council Member for Atlanta.

Dr. Lewis next introduced Dr. John Eaves, the Chairman of the Fulton County Commission, a Morehouse graduate and also a Fulbrighter to Germany in 2003 as part of the International Education Administrators Program and, in 2004, as part of the Specialist Program to Finland. Dr.

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Eaves thanked the visitors, welcomed all and commented about how much he valued his Fulbright experiences. He noted that Atlanta is such a special place; since 2001, more people have moved to the region than anywhere else in the United States. He noted the high quality of life, and the climate, higher educational institutions and the diversity in the region.

Dr. Eaves discussed a program he established, the Global Youth Leadership Program, which raised private dollars and took more than 100 students to Brazil, South Africa, Germany, and Turkey, as well as a group to China in June 2012. He also discussed a partnership between Fulton County and the 4th largest state in Brazil, in order to facilitate intercultural exchanges along educational lines, the arts, health and education.

Dr. Lewis thanked all of the speakers.

Board Business – Open Session

Chairman Healy began the official portion of the meeting, reporting that a full working session of the Board was held the previous day, and that later, there would be a panel discussion on diversity in the Fulbright Program, organized by Dr. Shelby Lewis.

Member Betty Castor of the Board's Legislative and Public Affairs Committee indicated that she, Anita McBride and Gabriel Guerra-Mondragón spoke via teleconference to discuss what the Committee could do to enhance the Board's reputation with Congress. They decided that the Board should develop a Fulbright narrative or storyline, knowing the reality of the fiscal conditions of the country and the partisanship exhibited in Congress. She mentioned that the information the previous day provided by the Acting Director of the Office of Academic Exchanges at the State Department, Michelle Johnson, was exactly what was needed, and that the Board should take that information and put it into a stronger narrative to provide Members of Congress with information on cost-sharing and what other countries are contributing. It is also important to show Congress how we are enhancing our private sector contributions to the Fulbright Program.

Chairman Healy commented on the great bipartisan support for the Fulbright Program and how the program has weathered well, despite small cutbacks in budget with the fiscal situation. He then introduced Catherine Stearns, the FSB Public Affairs and Communications Advisor, to speak to the Board.

Ms. Stearns told the Board the importance of sharing their unique voices with the world. She said that the power of words would be a marvelous theme for the Board, and noted how valuable it is to have images to convey these words. She noted that there have been several goals established for the Board this year. The first is to integrate the Board's voice into the outreach of the State Department, because of their unique perspectives and their ability to meet and interact with so many Fulbrighters around the world. Second, the Board can help to convey and magnify that the Fulbright Program is not an elitist program; rather, it is diverse, flexible, adaptable, cost-effective and ready to serve the interests of cultivating mutual understanding. She noted the

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importance of putting a human face on the Board to increase engagement. Ms. Stearns assured the Board that they have the full support of the staff at the State Department. She noted a new emphasis on social media and that the Board had established its own presence on Twitter.

Acting Executive Director John Dickson then added that Ms. Stearns has developed a draft communications plan that was sent out to the Board Members for their review.

Member Shelby Lewis spoke up to thank Ms. Stearns and let the Board know how wonderful she is to work with. She also reminded those in Atlanta that she would be hearing from Ms. Stearns for communications and press releases.

Chairman Healy expressed gratitude for the extraordinary outreach that has been happening in Atlanta, and what a fantastic alumni network that exists in the city. He pointed out two members of the National Fulbright Alumni Board are present at the meeting, and they can serve as mentors for the diversity program.

John Dickson then noted that the Annual Report is in production, filled with Fulbright stories from the past year. The report will have some new and exciting storytelling elements.

Chairman Healy noted that the June Board meeting will be held in New York City June 11-12 and the September meeting will be held in Washington, DC.

Each Board Member introduced themselves to the audience, stating where they came from and their position. Chairman Healy noted that it is a 12-member Board, appointed by the President, and that there are current vacancies to be filled.

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Panel Discussion —

DIVERSITY IN THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM: Challenge and Opportunity

Dr. Shelby Lewis opened the panel discussion, *DIVERSITY IN THE FULBRIGHT PROGRAM: Challenge and Opportunity*. She thanked Loretta Parham and the staff at the Woodruff Library for the wonderful job they did in setting up for the FSB meeting. She then introduced C.T. Martin, an Atlanta Councilmember for more than 20 years.

C.T. Martin spoke as an advocate for the city of Atlanta, noting that he was pleased that the Board meeting was being held there. Atlanta's history and diversity make it an ideal place for such an event.

Dr. Lewis noted the distinguished panel would be speaking about the challenges and opportunities involved in the diversity in the Fulbright Program. She introduced Dr. Sandra Harris-Hooker, Vice President and Senior Associate Dean of Morehouse School of Medicine, who would be moderate the panel.

Dr. Sandra Harris-Hooker thanked Dr. Lewis for the warm introduction and said she was honored to participate with such a distinguished panel. Shared perspectives on Fulbright diversity are so important as is the discussion topic. She introduced the panelists.

David Levin is a Senior Program Manager at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State where he manages Fulbright scholar programs and other programs worldwide. He also serves as the Bureau's Fulbright alumni liaison and diversity outreach coordinator.

Mr. Levin began by raising four questions to consider with regards to diversity within the Fulbright Program.

- 1- Why is diversity important within the Fulbright Program?
- 2- What are the diversity objectives of the program?
- 3- What are examples of completed and ongoing Fulbright diversity efforts?
- 4- What are some future strategies and initiatives?

Mr. Levin provided program background and discussed the benefits that are accrued through diversifying international exchanges and furthering mutual understanding. He talked about overarching diversity strategies that the State Department (and formerly USIA) has been engaged in since the mid-1990s and noted the importance of maintaining and increasing the efforts. He read the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Diversity Statement was created in 1995, and has since been significantly expanded and an understanding that for the Bureau's programs to be optimally successful, they had to reflect the diversity of American society and of countries around the world.

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He added that Diversity is now one of four Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs strategic goals.

Regarding Fulbright Program diversity, David Levin mentioned four objectives for diversity within the Program: First, is to increase the number of Fulbright applicants and grantees from minority populations in the United States and overseas; second, is to increase the number of Minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and community colleges serving as hosts for visiting Fulbrighters to the United States; third, is addressing diversity for visiting Fulbright grantees to gain a greater appreciation of the diversity of America and how that contributes to America's uniqueness and strength and fourth, to work with the Fulbright alumni organizations in order to enhance program diversity and diverse alumni involvement.. Mr. Levin mentioned a variety of activities in place including workshops, conferences, campus visits, and advertising in publications, all in particular relation to minority audiences. Reaching out to the disability community is always important, and the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange works closely with the State Department in this regard, ECA also works with the White House Initiatives for HBCUs, Tribal Colleges and Hispanic Americans and with the President's Council on Disability.

David Levin added that diversifying Fulbright applicant pools and grantee rosters abroad is equally important, yet challenging given the definitions of diversity vary overseas, from region to region and country to country.

Mr. Levin referred to the enrichment activities for visiting Fulbrighters in various cities across the country, helping the grantees to to examine a wide variety of topics, so that they can experience and appreciate America's diversity.

He also noted the importance of alumni representatives and how essential they are in helping to diversify the program. He pointed out the Alumni Ambassador program, which selects students and scholars who recently returned from their exchanges to help promote the program by visiting underserved geographic areas and speaking to minority audiences. A recent capacity building/enhancement grant to the U.S. Fulbrighter Alumni Association bolsters its efforts to 1) increase the number of alumni chapters throughout the country, especially in underserved geographic areas; 2) develop training materials for alumni to better promote Fulbright program opportunities to broader segments of American society and 3) conduct a multi-faceted alumni search/membership drive, focusing especially on diverse alumni and young alumni.

Mr. Levin closed by saying that the overall diversity effort is a work in progress, despite the many gains that have been made. Numbers have increased in some areas, though not all, but this progress is good. ECA continues to reach out to universities and to add Fulbright campus representatives at Minority-serving institutions and community college. He noted there creating a diversity-oriented recruitment and promotion video is under consideration. Broad media outreach is in progress to academic journals, and magazines in order to further promote the Fulbright brand. And reaching out to potential applicants through new venues is taking place, such as academic and social fraternities, multi-ethnic and diversity-related organizations and

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disabled student service offices are beginning. It's a challenge and a long term process, but success is so important.

Dr. Harris-Hooker introduced the next panelist, Dr. Mack Jones, a distinguished professor of political science at Clark Atlanta University. He was a Senior Fulbright Scholar in Nigeria in 1982. Dr. Jones remarked that he was pleased to be a part of the panel, and that he has always had high regard for the Fulbright Program. He underscored the importance of mutual understanding amongst communities, and that he believes this is an essential prerequisite for promoting international peace. He noted how the idea of diversity has taken on a new meaning of the word, a new meaning of its own. He contrasted procedural diversity with functional diversity, and how important outreach is in order to achieve both. Dr. Jones suggested an idea of pairing up scholars from different communities who may well reflect different ideas. This would allow entire universities to be involved because of the mutual understanding being exhibited. This would give a much richer understanding of the host country, as well as American society.

Dr. Harris-Hooker next introduced Ms. Milano Nakamoto, a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) at Atlanta's Spelman College. From Japan, Ms. Nakamoto majored in English and Education, and aims to become a high school English teacher. She taught elementary level Japanese classes, as well as tutored upper level students, while concurrently taking two classes at Spelman College. She told the Board that, with her goal to be an English teacher, she felt that she lacked confidence in herself; she wanted to grow personally, professionally and linguistically. She also wanted unique experiences to be able to share with her students, which led to her discovery of the Fulbright Program. She discovered that there were two American Fulbrighters at her university at the time, and she learned from them more about the program. She discussed the lengthy application process, taking the English proficiency exam, and learning that she had been accepted as an FLTA.

Ms. Nakamoto recounted her orientation programs; both in Tokyo and in the United States, in California. She reflected on her insecurities, being the only Asian student in an African-American university and the culture shock that accompanied it. She soon met other international students with similar experiences, and this helped quite a bit. Ms. Nakamoto recalled her experiences during International Education Week, presenting her culture to the Spelman community. She noted that she wants her students to have opportunities to think about their own culture, as she believes that it is a very important step in becoming an international person. She wants her students to have the capacity to learn and observe different cultures and share experiences with one another. She talked about an FLTA conference in DC that she attended, and meeting other FLTAs from all across the country. The conference showed the FLTAs new ways of teaching and how to improve their teaching methods. She highlighted her eagerness to meet more people, to learn about their cultures and what they had experienced, and to forge new friendships going forward. She noted that the most important part of her experience was learning ways to motivate her students to learn English, and to share her experiences with her students in Japan.

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Dr. Harris-Hooker introduced the final speaker of the day; Mr. Julius Coles, Director of the Office of Global Education and the Andrew Young Center for International Affairs at Morehouse College. He had worked with USAID and served in Swaziland, Senegal, Vietnam, Morocco, Liberia, Nepal, and Washington, DC. Mr. Coles shared his experiences with Fulbright while on a program set up for minority institutions in 1999, where he went to Vietnam. He mentioned how this travelling group of professors included black, white, and Asian professors, and he said that Fulbright should consider this type of group program again, as having diversity within a group created further impact for building ties and relationships. He mentioned that the number of African-American Fulbright Scholars in Africa studying AIDS programs is quite small, and this surprised him quite a bit, thinking that there would be more.

Mr. Coles discussed the need for recruitment and a more aggressive approach to attract scholars from minority professors to apply for a Fulbright. The numbers at Morehouse, he said, are quite small, and something must be done to attract them to the Program. On the other hand, he said that Spelman has been much more successful at attracting students and scholars to the Fulbright Program, and that their applications have been much more successful as well. He said that Morehouse has had a number of Rhodes and Marshall Scholars, and that Fulbright needs to look at how to increase their numbers.

Mr. Coles said that he had recently applied for an International Educators Administrators Program grant to Korea. To his disappointment, he learned that, without Morehouse having a program in Korea his application would not be forwarded to the next round, although he had applied for the grant to Korea, specifically in order to establish ties in order to create a Korean program at Morehouse. He said that the selection process needs to look at this issue. In some cases, Fulbright can help make connections for creation of such programs, and that should be taken into consideration. Minority representation is so important that this issue warrants greater consideration. He mentioned that he has served on Fulbright selection panels in the past and was pleased to see clear instructions on diversity during their review of applications.

The floor was opened for questions. Jackie Forster introduced herself, and said that she taught at Spelman for many years, and is now at Georgia Tech. She mentioned that at Tech, there is a school of foreign languages, focusing on modern languages. She said that one of their growing languages is Korean, and mentioned the possibility of partnering with the Atlanta University Center, to offer more opportunities to students who want to study the language.

Another audience member stressed the importance of leadership from the minority community.

Meghann Curtis, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Program at the State Department introduced herself and mentioned the importance of encouraging undergrad students to study abroad, as that can guide them towards applying for a Fulbright later. She asked what Spelman and Morehouse are doing to encourage their students to do this. Mr. Coles replied that Morehouse has been sending students abroad since the 1960s and that the interest has always been there. Despite low numbers from both Spelman and Morehouse, they are working to increase the number of students going abroad, and he'd like to encourage them to go for full

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semesters, and even full years, in some cases. He mentioned that the main problem they have with this is a lack of financial resources for students to go abroad for any length of time.

Phil Bolton introduced himself as the publisher GlobalAtlanta, a news service which covers ethnic communities. Mr. Bolton noted the importance of communications in today's world, and how much it has eased challenges. He mentioned that students might use Skype in order to project their experiences to others, while they are abroad. That might help to overcome barriers that are experienced and ease isolation. He mentioned that creating Fulbright student centers would help with this. David Levin responded to this by saying that they are looking at ways of broadening communication channels for Fulbrighters on assignment. He noted that many Fulbrighters are using blogs to share their experiences. He again cited the alumni ambassadors that are enthusiastically reaching out to others to share their stories, and promoting the program across the country. He said that Fulbright is looking at more ways of using social media to promote and expand the program. He also discussed the importance of reaching out to high school students, to work with them on developing international interest and perspective as they transition from high school to college, and beyond.

Another audience member spoke up, indicating that he came from Nigeria and now teaches in Atlanta, after having done two Fulbrights. He was pleased to see how diverse Atlanta has become, and he welcomed the fact that his children were growing up in this community. He noted the profound affect that his Fulbrights have had on his teaching career, as a middle school teacher.

Nancy Neill, of the National Fulbright Association Board of Directors, mentioned that the Association's capacity-building/enhancement grant from the State Department is helping to develop an aspect of the Association's website to allow webinars for Fulbrighters, which allows them to talk and share ideas.

Arnia Vinia of Clark Atlanta University (CAU), told the Board about a new CAU initiative focusing on international studies, where students of all disciplines are encouraged to study abroad. When they begin their studies at CUA, they are encouraged to take up a program that includes the possibility of studying overseas.

Another member of the audience suggested diversifying the Fulbright review panel, but also stressed the importance of having a clear set of guidelines for criteria for the team to follow. She used the example that had been given earlier about not being accepted because of a lack of a certain program at a home university. She mentioned that perhaps the guidelines were to say that if you do not have an existing program, then you will be put in what might be called a transitional award, so that you can transition from not having that program in place, but be brought in and be allowed to bring that program, so that you can transition to the next level.

Dr. Lewis again thanked Dr. Harris-Hooker for moderating the panel. She thanked the Board Members for giving her the honor of hosting the meeting in Atlanta, saying that it is paving the way for future FSB meetings to be held outside of DC. She thanked the audience for attending,

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and for their thoughtful questions and comments and interest. She also announced that both CAU-TV and Fulton County TV recorded the meeting and will be airing it.

Dr. Lewis also mentioned that, in her experiences both in the United States and abroad, Fulbright is most often seen as a staffing tool, to fill gaps where courses need to be taught. They are not seen as ambassadors in terms of outreach, and the campus does not make it easy for them to serve as ambassadors. This is something that needs to be addressed, so that teachers can extend their outreach at the universities where they are located. She also talked about the feeling of isolation that visiting students and scholars experience, when they feel as though they are not included. She thought it was important to make them realize that they are always to be included, always invited to events and don't need a special invitation. She reflected on the southern tradition of speaking to people you don't know, greeting them, and making them feel as though they are a part of the community. This is something that should be cautiously worked towards in exchange programs. Dr. Lewis thanked everyone once again, and turned the meeting back to Chairman Healy.

Chairman Healy thanked Dr. Lewis and mentioned the generations of great experience and comments that came up today. He noted the need for greater transparency about how panels work, and how diversity is manifested in their mandates. He said that the Board is always happy to work with universities to improve their numbers. He said that the Board is easy to reach and always happy to work with people. He again thanked the panelists and the audience, and noted the southern hospitality that the Board has experienced. He thanked Dr. Lewis for her decades of service and engagement in Fulbright, for the wisdom and knowledge that she shares, and for her great efforts to organize this visit to Atlanta for the Board.

Chairman Healy adjourned the meeting.